AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 7, line 2, with the following amended paragraph.

In a related aspect, the invention provides any isolated or purified peptide or protein comprising an amino acid polypeptide that codes for a protease capable of cleaving the beta secretase cleavage site of APP that contains two or more sets of special amino acids, where the special amino acids are separated by about 100 to 300 amino acid positions, where each amino acid in each position can be any amino acid, where the first set of special amino acids consists of the amino acids DTG, where the first amino acid of the first special set of amino acids is, the first special amino acid, D, and where the second set of amino acids is either DSG or DTG, where the last amino acid of the second set of special amino acids is the last special amino acid, G, where the first special amino acid is operably linked to amino acids that code for any number of amino acids from zero to 81 amino acid positions where in each position it may be any amino acid. In a preferred embodiment, the first special amino acid is operably linked to a peptide from about 30-77 or about 64 to 77 amino acids positions where each amino acid position may be any amino acid. In a particular embodiment, the first special amino acid is operably linked to a peptide 35, 47, 71, or 77 amino acids. In a very particular embodiment, the first special amino acid is operably linked to 71 amino acids and the first of those 71 amino acids is the amino acid T. For example, the polypeptide comprises a sequence that is at least 95% identical to an aspartyl protease sequence as described herein. In another embodiment, the first special amino acid is operably linked to any number of from 40 to 54 amino acids (positions) where each amino acid position may be any amino acid. In a particular embodiment, the first special amino acid is operably linked to amino acids that code for a peptide of 47 amino acids. In a very particular embodiment, the first special amino acid is operably linked to a 47 amino acid peptide where the first those 47 amino acids is the amino acid E. In another particular embodiment, the first special amino acid is operably linked to the same corresponding peptides from SEQ ID NO. [[3]] 4 that are 35, 47, 71, or 77 peptides in length, beginning counting with the amino acids on the first special sequence, DTG, towards the N-terminal of SEQ ID NO. [[3]] 4. In another particular embodiment, the polypeptide comprises a sequence that is at least 95% identical to the same corresponding amino acids in SEQ ID NO. 4, that is, identical to that portion of the sequences in SEQ ID NO. 4, including all the sequences from both the first and or the second special nucleic acids,

toward the – terminal, through and including 71, 47, 35 amino acids before the first special amino acids. For example, the complete polypeptide comprises the peptide of 71 amino acids, where the first of the amino acid is T and the second is Q.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 13, line 30, with the following amended paragraph.

In a related aspect, the invention provides a polynucleotide comprising a nucleotide sequence that encodes a polypeptide as described in the preceding paragraphs. Such a polynucleotide is useful for recombinant expression of the polypeptide of the invention for use in APP processing assays. In addition, the polynucleotide is useful for transforming into cells to produce recombinant cells that express the polypeptide of the invention, which cells are useful in cell-based assays to identify modulators of APP processing. Thus, in addition to polynucleotides, the invention provides a vector comprising such polynucleotides, especially expression vectors where the polynucleotide is operably linked to a promoter to promote expression of the polypeptide encoded by the polynucleotide in a host cell. The invention further provides a host cell transformed or transfected with a polynucleotide ~~according to claim 14~~ of the invention or a vector ~~according to claim 15 or 16~~ of the invention. Among the preferred host cells are mammalian cells, especially human cells.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 16, line 22, with the following amended paragraph.

The β-secretase cleavage site in APP is known, and it will be appreciated that the ~~oassays~~ assays of the invention can be performed with either intact APP or fragments or analogs of APP that retain the β-secretase recognition and cleavage site. Thus, in one variation, the substrate polypeptide of the second composition comprises the amino acid sequence SEVNLDAEFR (SEQ ID NO: 63), which includes the β-secretase recognition site of human APP that contains the ~~"Swiss"~~ "Swedish" mutation. In another variation, the substrate polypeptide of the second composition comprises the amino acid sequence EVKMDAEF (SEQ ID NO: 67). In another variation, the second composition comprises a polypeptide having an amino acid sequence of a human amyloid precursor protein (APP). For example, the human amyloid precursor protein is selected from the group consisting of:

APP695, APP751, and APP770. Preferably, the human amyloid precursor protein (irrespective of isoform selected) includes at least on mutation selected from a KM→NL ~~Swiss~~ Swedish mutation and a V→F London mutation. As explained elsewhere, one preferred embodiment involves a variation wherein the polypeptide having an amino acid sequence of a human APP further comprises an amino acid sequence comprising a marker sequence attached amino-terminal to the amino acid sequence of the human amyloid precursor protein. Preferably, the polypeptide having an amino acid sequence of a human APP further comprises two lysine residues attached to the carboxyl terminus of the amino acid sequence of the human APP. The assays can be performed in a cell free setting, using cell-free enzyme and cell-free substrate, or can be performed in a cell-based assay wherein the second composition comprises a eukaryotic cell that expresses amyloid precursor protein (APP) or a fragment thereof containing a β-secretase cleavage site. Preferably, the APP expressed by the host cell is an APP variant that includes two carboxyl-terminal lysine residues. It will also be appreciated that the β-secretase enzyme can be an enzyme that is expressed on the surface of the same cells.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 32, line 26, with the following amended paragraph.

Hu-Asp variants within the scope of the invention may comprise conservatively substituted sequences, meaning that one or more amino acid residues of a Hu-Asp polypeptide are replaced by different residues that do not alter the secondary and/or tertiary structure of the Hu-Asp polypeptide. Such substitutions may include the replacement of an amino acid by a residue having similar physicochemical properties, such as substituting one aliphatic residue (Ile, Val, Leu or Ala) for another, or substitution between basic residues Lys and Arg, acidic residues Glu and Asp, amide residues Gln and Asn, hydroxyl residues Ser and ~~Tyr~~ Thr, or aromatic residues Phe and Tyr. Further information regarding making phenotypically silent amino acid exchanges may be found in Bowie *et al., Science 247*:1306-1310 (1990). Other Hu-Asp variants which might retain substantially the biological activities of Hu-Asp are those where amino acid substitutions have been made in areas outside functional regions of the protein.